

THE AMAZON SYNOD & OURSELVES
28th Sunday Ordinary Time Year C, 13^h October 2019

NON-VIOLENCE

Already in *Luke's Gospel 9:51-55* Jesus was not welcomed at a Samaritan village since he was heading for Jerusalem.

The apostles James and John want retribution, 'payback', vengeance against the Samaritan village.

Instead, Jesus rebukes James and John. Jesus did not condone violence.

WE WONDER WHAT THE OTHER DISCIPLES THOUGHT ABOUT IT?
HOW COULD JESUS BREAK DOWN THE CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS BARRIER BETWEEN JEWS AND SAMARITANS?

CHARITY

Jesus is now on the journey to Jerusalem where he will suffer, die and rise from the dead. In the next chapter of *Luke's Gospel 10:29-37*, Jesus tells a parable that we name the *Good Samaritan*.

A Samaritan is the hero of the story, the model of charity.

So far, we have two lessons – *Non-Violence* and *Charity*.

GOSPEL OF LUKE 17:11-19

Today's Gospel passage is seven chapters later, in chapter 17. Let us read it together

"On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!'

When he saw them, he said to them, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.'
And as they went, they were made clean.

Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan.

Then Jesus asked, 'Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?'
Then he said to him, 'Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.' "

JESUS TEACHES US

In this passage we hear that Jesus treats all ten people equally.
He heals each one of them.

Our next lesson – there is **no them and us. We are equal in the sight of God.**

Only one returns to give thanks to God, and that person is a Samaritan.

WE ASK OURSELVES – WHO ARE THE SAMARITANS IN OUR MIDST?

Jesus is not captive to our prejudice.

Jesus is not restrained by our intolerance of others.

Jesus highlights the faith of the healed Samaritan.

Jesus encourages the Samaritan.

This Samaritan is the one who models true gratitude to God.

AMAZON SYNOD & OCEANIA

As Church, we follow these three weeks in Rome as the Amazon Synod unfolds.

In Week One, presenters and delegates have raised many issues.

Even though the Catholic Churches in the Amazon are examining issues in their region, we reflect on comparisons with Oceania and Australia in particular.

WHAT IS IN COMMON AND WHAT IS DIFFERENT?

We learn from each other.

Cardinal Hummes at the beginning of the Synod said:

'In conclusion, to comply with the working dynamics of this synodal assembly, I wish to suggest a number of core issues:

- a) The outgoing Church and its new pathways in Amazonia;*
- b) The Church's Amazonian face: inculturation and inter-culturality in a missionary-ecclesial context;*
- c) Ministries in the Church in Amazonia: presbyterate, diaconate, ministries and the role played by women;*
- d) The work done by the Church in looking after our "shared home"; listening to the earth and to the poor; integral environmental, economic, social and cultural ecology;*
- e) The Amazonian Church in the urban reality;*
- f) The issues concerning water;*
- g) others.'*

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THE CHURCH IN AMAZON?

We learn from Jesus how he highlighted the Samaritans in a parable - *The Good Samaritan*

and in a healing - *of the 10 people with leprosy*

He educated people on how to break down the barriers that divide us.

He encouraged the Jewish disciples to be open to and learn from Samaritans.

To love their neighbour.

With that same fidelity to Jesus,

let us be open to and learn from the Amazon Synod.

Let us reword the Synod input:

- a) The outgoing Church and its *new pathways in Oceania*;
- b) The *Church's face of Oceania*: inculturation and inter-culturality in a missionary-ecclesial context;
- c) *Ministries in the Church in Oceania*: presbyterate, diaconate, ministries and the role played by women;
- d) The work done by the Church in *looking after our "shared home"*; listening to the earth and to the poor; integral environmental, economic, social and cultural ecology;
- e) The *Church of Oceania* the urban reality;
- f) The issues concerning *water*;
- g) *others*. (What would we add?)

WHY SUGGEST OCEANIA AND NOT AUSTRALIA?

As Australia, we are a part of Oceania.

HOW WILL OUR AUSTRALIAN PLENARY COUNCIL JOURNEY LEARN FROM THE AMAZON SYNOD PROCESS AND OUTCOMES?

HOW WILL OUR AUSTRALIAN PLENARY COUNCIL JOURNEY BE OPEN TO THE WIDER CHURCH IN OCEANIA?

We need to work together.

In recent church discussions on migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, the point was well made that **we don't work together enough as Church in Oceania**.

May Jesus say to each of us, as he said to the Samaritan

'Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.'

Let us go on our way, working together in mission.

Let us pray.

Fr. Gerry

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/101319.cfm>]

